



# Department of Justice

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## **TRIO OF CHILD ABDUCTORS CHARGED IN FEDERAL COURT**

**MONTGOMERY, ALABAMA**— Federal carjacking charges have been filed in the United States District Court for the Middle District of Alabama against three people allegedly responsible for the kidnapping of three children over the weekend in Ozark, Alabama, U.S. Attorney Louis V. Franklin, Sr., announced today. According to the criminal complaint filed on Tuesday, Melissa Lynn Mione McGee, Westly Robert Rogers, and Joshua Gilley worked together to steal an Isuzu Rodeo from a young couple in a rural location near Brundidge, Alabama. The three children, ages 2 1/2, 1 1/2, and 2 months, were sitting in the backseat of the Rodeo when it was taken. All three children have been safely recovered.

Title 18, United States Code, Section 2119, makes it a federal crime to take a motor vehicle that has been transported, shipped, or received in interstate or foreign commerce from the person or presence of another by force and violence or by intimidation, with the intent to cause death or serious bodily harm. If convicted of the charge, the defendants each face up to 15 years imprisonment, a \$250,000 fine, and three years of supervised release.

Earlier this afternoon, the defendants made their initial appearance before the Honorable Susan Russ Walker, Chief United States Magistrate Judge for the Middle District of Alabama. On the government's motion, Judge Walker ordered the defendants to be detained over the weekend pending a preliminary hearing, which has been scheduled for June 15, 2011, at 10:00 a.m.

According to the complaint, the victims were first introduced to McGee two weeks earlier by someone they had met over the internet named "Nate," who referred to McGee as "Jewels." On Sunday evening, the victims drove to meet McGee in the hopes of moving into a mobile home she had allegedly promised them. When they arrived, McGee introduced them to Rogers and Gilley, who immediately assaulted the young couple and forcibly removed them from their vehicle. The assailants then allegedly climbed into the Isuzu and drove off with the three children still in the back seat. The complaint alleges that McGee drove a white SUV ahead of them and later took custody of the baby, while the two older children were dropped off in the driveway of a residence in Black, Alabama. The occupants of the residence then brought the children to a nearby hospital.

Less than 48 hours after the crime occurred, law enforcement officers were able to track down the baby to a private residence in Dothan, Alabama. According to the complaint, the

woman who lived there told authorities that she had agreed to watch the baby for McGee, who had claimed the stolen baby was her own child.

**Members of the public are reminded that the complaint contains only charges. All defendants are presumed innocent of the charges, and the burden will be on the United States to prove the defendants' guilt beyond a reasonable doubt at trial.**

This case is being investigated by the Federal Bureau of Investigation, which is being assisted by the Dale County Sheriff's Office, the United States Marshals Service, the Geneva County Sheriff's Office, the Alabama Bureau of Investigation, the Ozark Police Department, the Walton County (Florida) Sheriff's Office, the Houston County Sheriff's Office, the Dothan Police Department, the National Center for Missing and Exploited Children, and other law enforcement partners.

Assistant United States Attorney Nathan D. Stump will prosecute the case.